

## **STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS COUNTY OF NEWPORT**

The Town Council of the Town of Tiverton, County and State aforesaid held a Joint Workshop with the School Committee and the Budget Committee on Wednesday, the 23rd day of September 2015 at 7:00 p.m. at the Tiverton High School Library, 100 North Brayton Road.

### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Councilor President deMedeiros, Vice-President Chabot, Councilor Lambert, Councilor Mello, Councilor Sousa and Councilor Perry. Councilor Pelletier was absent.

### **1. Call To Order**

Council President deMedeiros called the Council portion to order with the pledge of allegiance to the flag. Roll call conducted by Leona Cook, Clerk.

School Committee Chair Sally Black called the School Committee portion to order and conducted the roll call. Sally Black, Jerome Larkin, James Arruda and Carol Herrmann were present.

Budget Committee Present , Chair John Souza , Nancy Driggs, Donna Cook, Madeline O'Dell, Deborah Janick and Joseph F. Bento III.

B/C -Absent – Laura Epke, Josh Mello, Louise Durfee, Cecil Leonard and Alex Cote.

### **2. Review of School Facilities Committee Study**

School Superintendent William Rearick distributed the Facility Analysis documents for the individual schools; two highlighted in yellow were the High School and Middle School recommendations. The recommendations are prioritized on the basis of health and safety using a scale of 1-4. The subcommittee went through the documents. The School Committee (SC) adopted the recommendations as submitted. The elementary school issues have been taken care of. These prices were estimated in 2014, should add 5-6% to get the real price. Estimate would add \$1.4million to the total cost. The purpose of this workshop is informational, give time to digest then come back again in this fall for a joint meeting. The recommendations are based on priority of health and safety; only looking at those numbered 1&2. Mr. Larkin clarified in the School Department 2013-14 budget funds were allocated for a facility study to look at the infrastructure of all 5 schools. The elementary schools were repaired out of one time capital expenses. Important to realize the schools are largely intact, the lifetime of the schools can be extended now. Can still get reimbursed from the State because they are health and safety issues. Have made substantial capital improvements out of the reserve and the budget. There is a very specific process according to the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), eligible for 40% reimbursement if everything gets approved. Every year have to submit a report on infrastructure to RIDE on the status of the school buildings. Sally Black, SC Chair explained RIDE also looks at population growth; Tiverton was 1 of 7 that had grown. The reimbursement will go to the Town.

Council President deMedeiros noted the Middle School also serves as the emergency shelter, had a problem with the generator this winter and should have some priority. Mr. Larkin explained that can be discussed, what is doable, what is for health and safety. Mr. Rearick explained the SC determines what can be spent out the school reserve funds, what is in the budget are recurring expenses. There is a pool of \$20 million to get reimbursement, do not have enough in the reserves to cover these recommendations. Look at what can be afforded; go to RIDE with this plan for items A-D, if the plan is approved for reimbursement cannot just submit a plan without a way of paying for it. Councilor Sousa opined, looking at a bond, if all are done could be \$9million. Mr. Rearick noted if it was just the 1&2's would be \$7.4million, right now just sharing information, not proposing anything. Project the schools will last 20-30 years with these improvements. BC Member Mrs. O'Dell suggested having some sort of oversight. Mr

Larkin explained that would be steps away when a building oversight committee would be formed. In discussing the bond Councilor Perry suggested if getting a 40 % reimbursement would be looking at a \$6million dollar bond. Town Treasurer Denise Saurette, though not in attendance at this meeting, was looking into refinancing of existing school bonds to save money. Mr. Rearick believes RIDE will expand the program at this time to include everything listed. Mrs. Black noted every year along with Mr. Rearick and Representative Edwards go to the State requesting funds for reimbursement. Mr. Rearick noted the capacity of the school is 700, now have 585. The high school was built in 1966, life expectancy of the buildings are 50 years. Councilor Lambert noted not every citizen knows about these issues; need to communicate these issues and about future developments in town. Councilor Lambert discussed with Kate Michaud, Planning Board Administrative Officer the potential for 715 new students from these developments, was concerned about the future impact. Mr. Larkin agreed there is not a great awareness in town; this is the beginning of the process to make people aware of the needs for the schools.

Ms. Driggs opined bonding won't be easy given the mood of the Town from recent referendums. Mr. Larkin noted the need for a consensus from the committees. Councilor Perry suggested concentrating on the next 6 months, the Comp Plan committee will be submitting documents to the Council, believed the Council could have an 18 month moratorium period on building of any kind in Town. President deMedeiros inquired about the next steps. Mr. Rearick suggested another joint meeting for budget purposes, can answer questions, important for the BC to know how it is going to be funded. Councilor Chabot questioned Mr. Rearick if the Town would get reimbursed \$3 million for a project of that size, the State may not approve. Mr. Rearick explained right now the SC is asking for \$570k, the SC has that in reserve in case there is no reimbursement. That would come out of the \$20 million pool of funds. This is setting up for future funding; Mr. Rearick understood the \$20million was just for this year. Mr. Souza, BC Chair questioned some of the items on the yellow highlighted handouts. Mr. Rearick explained the SC was taking care of some of the smaller items, need to come back and discuss the 6 figure items. President deMedeiros noted the need for a new list. Some discussion followed on what letter codes were reimbursable, it was determined items under the letters C, A and S were reimbursable from RIDE. President deMedeiros requested an updated list. Mr. Rearick explained these lists are what the SC has done to date and what the SC has received. What will be provided in the future is what was paid for out of capital, what was spent, what will be spent and will have the representative from RGB come and answer questions. Discussion followed on setting a date for the next joint meeting. The consensus was for Tuesday, October 27 at 7pm in the High School Library.

Being no further discussion all Boards adjourned.

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

Councilor Perry motioned, seconded by Councilor Sousa to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

The workshop adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Minutes compiled by Leona Cook, Clerk and reviewed by Nancy L. Mello, Town Clerk.

**A True Copy.**

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Nancy L. Mello, Town Clerk